



# PRESS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release**

January 22, 2003

**DEFENDANTS ARRESTED IN DETROIT, MICHIGAN  
IN CONNECTION WITH BANK FRAUD CHARGES**

Tampa, FL - United States Attorney Paul I. Perez today announced the unsealing of an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on December 17, 2002 charging HASSAN KAMEL BAYDOUN, age 35, of Dearborn, Michigan, and HOUSSAM M. JOMAA, age 40, of Windsor, Ontario, Canada, with the crimes of conspiracy to commit bank fraud and to transport funds taken by fraud, two counts of interstate transportation of money taken by fraud, and three counts of bank fraud. Yesterday BAYDOUN and JOMAA were arrested in the Detroit, Michigan area and both defendants appeared before a United States Magistrate Judge in that district.

According to the indictment, both defendants engaged in a scheme to defraud First Union National Bank through the use of counterfeit checks. The indictment alleges that the defendants deposited counterfeit Adelpia Communication checks into an account they opened at First Union National Bank and then orchestrated the transfer or withdrawal of these funds before the bank discovered the counterfeit nature of the checks. As a direct

consequence of these actions, First Union National Bank suffered a loss of approximately \$493,076.00.

The defendants face a maximum sentence of five years' imprisonment on the conspiracy count, ten years' imprisonment on the interstate transportation of funds counts, and thirty years' imprisonment on the bank fraud counts, if convicted.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Manatee County Sheriff's Office were involved in the investigation of this case. The case will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jay L. Hoffer, Deputy Chief of the Special Prosecutions Section of the Tampa Division.